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Security Council

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Tuesday, 20 February 2007, 11 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Kubiš	(Slovakia)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Chevalier
	China	Mr. Cui Tiankai
	Congo	Mr. Ikouebe
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Indonesia	Mr. Jenie
	Italy	Mr. Craxi
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Rumaihi
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Wolff

Agenda

The maintenace of international peace and security: role of the Security Council in supporting security sector reform

Letter dated 8 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/72)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

07-24428 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The maintenance of international peace and security: role of the Security Council in supporting security sector reform

Letter dated 8 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/72)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Canada, Cuba, Egypt, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea, the Sudan, Switzerland and Uruguay, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I am pleased to invite the following participants under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council: Her Excellency Sheikha Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa, President of the General Assembly; His Excellency Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, President of the Economic and Social Council; and His Excellency Mr. Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins, Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw attention to documen S/2007/72, which contains the text of a letter dated February 2007 from the Permanent Representative o Slovakia to the United Nations addressed to th Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on th item under consideration.

Allow me to present my opening statement. I ar indeed honoured and privileged to open the firs Security Council open debate ever organized by th Slovak Republic. It is no coincidence that Slovakia ha chosen to devote this meeting to security sector reform since our own transitional experience has shown hov important such reform has been for security, stability good governance and rapid development in ou country.

During our one-year-long experience in th Security Council, we have learned how crucial securit sector reform has also been in other parts of the world Particularly in countries emerging from conflict, w have seen that the lack of reform of the security secto is an underlying cause of conflict or a reason fo relapse into it. In virtually all the cases that the Counci has dealt with, security sector reform has been precondition for stable and sustainable post-conflic stabilization and reconstruction.

Nevertheless, security sector reform goes fa beyond simple post-conflict institution- and capacity building. Unreformed security institutions directl affect the everyday lives of the people. It cannot therefore, be overemphasized that the ultimat objective of security sector reform should be th improvement of people's lives through that publi service.

If we are to achieve those goals, we have to solv one basic conundrum: how to strike a balance betwee national ownership and international support. Nationa ownership is crucial for the success and sustainabilit of any security sector reform. However, in post conflict environments in particular, national actor often lack adequate resources and international suppor becomes necessary. The United Nations system as a whole has done an excellent job in that regard b promoting security sector reform in many parts of th world. Nevertheless, we believe that there is room fo improvement in the coordination, coherence an efficiency of international activities. We believe tha today's debate will provide an important impetus i that regard.

It is therefore my pleasure to welcome among us Her Excellency Sheikha Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa, President of the General Assembly; His Excellency Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of Lithuania, President of the Economic and Social Council; and His Excellency Ambassador Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins, Permanent Representative of Angola, Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission.

A crucial role in these efforts will belong to the Secretary-General. It is therefore a special honour to have the Secretary-General present. As is the case for the Slovak presidency, this open debate is one of the first during the Secretary-General's term in office. We therefore believe that the issue of security sector reform will remain at the centre of his attention during his tenure.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The Secretary-General: I am pleased to join members for this debate on a theme that lies at the heart of the Security Council's responsibilities in the maintenance of international peace and security and, in particular, in assisting the re-establishment of sustainable peace after violent conflict. I am grateful to His Excellency Ján Kubiš, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovakia, for bringing us together under this rubric.

Security sector reform is a relatively new term for many of us. Yet it stands for issues that have long preoccupied our Organization: the search for sustainable security and the recognition that security is also a precondition for setting countries on the path to development.

For the United Nations, security sector reform aims to achieve effective, accountable and sustainable security institutions that operate under a framework of the rule of law and respect for human rights. In this way, security sector reform embraces values and principles that lie at the core of the United Nations: commitment to the rule of law, commitment to the protection of human rights and commitment to the State as the cornerstone of international peace and security.

The practical involvement of the United Nations in security sector reform has been shaped by decades of peacekeeping in post-conflict environments. From that experience, four fundamental lessons have come to shape our thinking.

First, security is a crucial and immediate condition for peacebuilding after conflict. A basic degree of security is one of the most visible and immediate dividends for communities, providing them with the opportunity to reclaim their lives and dignity. In this way, it is also a condition for initiating efforts towards long-term development.

We have learned that the ability of our peacekeepers to provide basic security at an early stage is shaped by how well security issues are addressed in the peacemaking phase. Today, we have a better understanding of how early decisions in peace agreements — particularly in the context of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) — impact subsequent efforts to establish sustainable security structures and processes. Our aim must be to ensure that peace agreements and DDR programmes contribute to, rather than impede, the restoration of sustainable security.

We are making progress on this front. We are developing our mediation capacities to support peacemaking and peace negotiations. And we have elaborated comprehensive, system-wide integrated DDR standards and programmes, which increasingly form an integral component of early peacebuilding efforts. Those early frameworks help lay the groundwork for sustainable security reform.

A second lesson we have learned is that security cannot be restored and maintained in a vacuum. In supporting efforts to achieve peace, it is vital that we address the needs and perspectives of the State and the communities within it. National ownership is the key to sustainable peace. That is why United Nations peace operations should rest on the principle that there must be a peace to keep, and why the United Nations efforts are focused on supporting national authorities in their efforts to establish sustainable security.

We have also come to recognize that national ownership in post-conflict environments is not a static entity. Rather, it evolves as leaders and communities are brought into the peacebuilding process. The wider the scope of local ownership, the more sustainable security will be. That principle guides our efforts in Kosovo, where the United Nations family is engaged with a wide range of State authorities and local

Government entities, and where we are conducting a province-wide consultation on security sector reform.

The purpose of this consultation is to obtain a comprehensive picture of security needs and perspectives — of the most pressing security concerns for local communities and how they believe those concerns can best be met. The same underlying principle has come to shape one of the unique aspects of United Nations peacekeeping — that among its contributors are a number of countries that have successfully made the transition from conflict to sustainable peace. The participation of those troops and police contributors brings valuable insights and perspectives to United Nations efforts to support national authorities.

The third lesson the United Nations has earned is that sustainable security goes beyond reintegrating soldiers and units, or training and equipping individual police officers. We have learned to our cost, in Haiti, Timor Leste, Sierra Leone and Liberia, that without effective, well-governed security institutions in place, the maintenance of peace is short-lived.

Sustainable security involves strengthening institutions and processes. It calls for capable management, sustainable funding, and effective oversight. That is why, in police reform, we no longer focus only on mentoring and monitoring individual police officers. Through such initiatives as the standing police capacity, we also work to support national authorities in building sustainable law enforcement institutions. We work closely with interior and justice ministries, with finance and public administration bodies, and we work with human rights ombudsmen and community groups.

Fourthly, and finally, we have learned that building sustainable security after conflict goes beyond the scope of any one actor. Even in the United Nations itself, there are many capacities scattered across the system it. We must coordinate those fully as part of an effective response.

But the United Nations is only one actor. To build sustainable security, many others must be engaged: Member States, regional organizations, Bretton Woods institutions and others, each of which brings specific insights and expertise. All those diverse efforts are needed, even if the combination of actors and tasks will differ in each context, and all of them need to be carefully coordinated. In many countries, the United Nations supports national Governments with such coordination. Because of its universality and its legitimacy, the United Nations has a particular contribution to make.

I am heartened that the Security Council has taken note of those lessons. Increasingly, peacekeeping mandates reflect the perspectives of security sector reform. Examples of tasks covering current United Nations peace operations include taking forward security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, carrying out institutional reforms and the constitution of integrated security forces in Burundi, strengthening Sierra Leone's security sector, and supporting the restructuring of the defence and security forces in Côte d'Ivoire.

From now on, our overall task must be to ensure that United Nations peacekeepers are provided with the guidance and support they need to carry out those tasks effectively and efficiently. We must provide peacekeepers with the standards, guidance and training they need to provide consistent and quality assistance to national authorities. We must ensure that mission leaders have the knowledge and staff expertise to direct personnel in carrying out complex support tasks, and we must provide capable and responsive support to field missions in security sector reform, in accordance with Security Council mandates. Finally, we must closely coordinate United Nations support for security reform in post-conflict environments with ongoing efforts to develop integrated peacebuilding strategies. I look forward to working with all Member States in pursuit of that important goal.

Again, let me express my appreciation, Sir, for your initiative in holding this debate and for the thorough way in which Slovakia has prepared for it. Let me also thank the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom for convening an Arria formula meeting on this topic last week. Above all, I am grateful to all members of the Council for their commitment to discharging effectively the serious responsibilities facing the Council.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his presence and for his inspiring statement.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with longer statements are

kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing in the Chamber and to deliver a condensed version when speaking.

I now give the floor to the President of the General Assembly, Sheikha Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa.

Ms. Al-Khalifa (spoke in Arabic): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Security Council, the Foreign Minister of the Slovak Republic, for inviting me to address the Security Council on the important issue of security sector reform.

The Security Council, as the Charter body mainly responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, has an essential role to play in addressing security sector reform. I warmly congratulate you, Mr. President, on this timely initiative.

I welcome today's important meeting, which follows recent debates in the General Assembly and the Security Council on the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. In many resolutions, the General Assembly has reaffirmed the United Nations leading role in helping countries emerging from conflict to build and strengthen institutional capacities, which promote coexistence and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The General Assembly has also stressed the importance of strengthening the role of the international community and all its institutions and programmes in dealing with countries emerging from conflict, in order to prevent them from sliding back into conflict. The role that security sector reform can play to promote that agenda must not be underestimated.

We should recognize that the United Nations has a comparative multilateral advantage over other organizations in that area. Due to its universal legitimacy, it is uniquely positioned to play a leading role in policy formulation and capacity building. No other Organization is as inclusive and as comprehensive as the United Nations.

Security sector reform in countries emerging from conflict is a very complex issue. The security apparatus of every country lies at the heart of its sovereignty and national identity. The core institutions of State — the police, army and judiciary — are crucial to internal stability and justice, good governance and the rule of law. The impartiality of those institutions reflects the strength and depth of a country's democratic values. Without the effective functioning of those institutions and the confidence of the people in them, economic development and democratic values will be undermined. A competent, law-abiding and well-governed security sector — with effective civilian oversight — is vital for overall peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts and sustainable development that can benefit the poor. That is why national ownership of any process of security sector reform is extremely important. The consolidation of peace and stability in post-conflict situations is dependent upon a nationally-owned process of socio-economic and political development, including security sector reform that is swift and effective.

The United Nations can play an important capacity-building role, in particular in the aftermath of a conflict. Security sector reform, beginning with peacekeeping operations, is an integral part of the transition from conflict situations to long-term stability and economic development.

Better coordination of our collective efforts at the international level and within this Organization is necessary to ensure that much-needed assistance to countries emerging from conflict has a greater impact. We need to adopt a common policy within the framework of the General Assembly to define such concepts and coordinate the efforts throughout the Organization and its departments and agencies in the field. In that connection, the Peacebuilding Commission can play a very important coordinating and substantive role, given the increasing demand for the support of the United Nations, especially now that most evident conflicts tend to be within States and not between States.

I would like to emphasize the important contribution that the General Assembly, as the chief deliberative and policy-making organ of the United Nations, can make to this emerging debate. Working together with the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, we can all contribute to the development of a general policy framework, in an open and transparent debate involving all Member States. I therefore welcome the opportunity for the General Assembly to discuss the Secretary-General's forthcoming report on security sector reform.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, President of the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. Čekuolis: I would like to thank the Slovak presidency of the Security Council for convening today's meeting and for inviting me to this debate on the role of the Security Council in supporting security sector reform. We welcome your invitation, Mr. President, because it is once again an acknowledgement that the traditional division between security issues, on the one hand, and development issues, on the other, is both artificial and unsustainable. Indeed, this is the perspective under which the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Africa have operated. Within the context of the mandate to promote an integrated approach to relief, reconstruction and development and to encourage the mobilization of resources, both Advisory Groups — those on Guinea-Bissau and on Burundi — have called for more attention to be paid to security sector reform as a way of addressing one of the key structural causes of conflict in many fragile countries — that is, the involvement of security forces in political matters. The experiences of the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups have led them to conclude that the role of security forces, in particular their internal role, and the process of security sector reform are key ingredients of the post-conflict peacebuilding agenda. Without a secure environment, recovery, reconstruction and sustainable development are not possible.

That is why the Ad Hoc Groups, in their meetings in the countries concerned, have always seen the military as key interlocutors for dialogue. It is that interaction, as well as their dialogue with other stakeholders, that has led them to support the call for security sector reform. Indeed, the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau joined its voice with that of the Security Council during their joint mission to Guinea-Bissau in June 2004, in calling for urgent and immediate assistance from the international community to finance a comprehensive restructuring package for the country's armed forces — because of concerns regarding poor conditions of service, ethnic divisions in the military and the availability of small arms in the country. In its resolution 2005/2, the Economic and Social Council also welcomed the recommendation by the Security Council to establish a voluntary emergency fund, to be administered by the United Nations Development Programme, to support efforts related to the planning and implementation of military reform.

It is fair to say that the Economic and Social Council considers that the lack of progress on security sector reform in post-conflict countries will continue to contribute to political instability and uncertainty, and thereby hamper development. Moreover, progress on poverty reduction will make the task of security sector reform easier, as demobilized soldiers and ex-combatants will be more willing to give up their guns. For that reason, special attention must be given to demobilized soldiers and ex-combatants in national poverty reduction strategies, as well as within the context of the development cooperation activities of the donor community.

As the United Nations system develops its capacities in support of security sector reform, the Economic and Social Council — within the context of its coordinating role in the economic, social, environmental and humanitarian fields — will continue to encourage and promote a coherent and coordinated approach based on a shared understanding of the system's comparative advantage relative to other multilateral, Government and civil society actors. In its sessions, the Economic and Social Council will do its part, within its mandate, to continue to support the efforts of the Security Council to promote security sector reform.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins, Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): Mr. President, I would like to start by thanking you personally and the Slovak presidency for inviting me, in my capacity as Chairman of the Peacebuilding Commission, to address the Council on this complex but very vital subject concerning security sector reform. Considering that security sector reform constitutes one of the key ingredients of the post-conflict peacebuilding agenda, this debate is obviously timely and of particular importance to the Peacebuilding Commission, as it is taking place at a moment when the newly established body has embarked on concrete action-oriented efforts in the field.

It is my hope that the proposals to be made today, and those made by different forums outside and within the United Nations on the subject, will enable the Security Council to reach its objective regarding the development of a comprehensive, coherent and

coordinated United Nations approach to security sector reform.

As I have just stated, the security sector is complex in terms of its composition as well as its nature. It is complex in its composition, in that it comprises a broad group of security actors, including the armed forces, police, intelligence and security services, security management and oversight bodies, justice and law enforcement institutions and non-statutory security forces, such as liberation armies, guerrillas and militias. That group is extremely broad. The security sector includes all those organizations that have the authority to use, or to order the use of, force or the threat of force to protect the State and its citizens, as well as those civil structures that are responsible for their management and oversight.

Given the complexity of the security sector, a comprehensive and coordinate approach is required in dealing with its problems, especially its reform. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno stated, while addressing the Fourth Committee in October of last year, that sustainable security sector reform required many international actors, that United Nations peacekeepers were only one of the elements in the picture and that Member States, multilateral actors and international financial institutions were equally crucial.

Although it is generally admitted that reform of the security sector is a field in which the United Nations still needs to develop capacities and coordination, it is also important to note that this Organization has accumulated valuable experience through its Department of Peacekeeping Operations and that the Security Council has dedicated particular attention to this question. The debate in the General Assembly on the report of the United Nations Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the experience of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Working Groups on countries emerging from conflicts have also produced valuable ideas on this issue. United Nations agencies, programmes and departments have also been involved in concrete actions on the ground or have developed important knowledge based on different aspects of the security sector.

I am equally pleased at the attention devoted to this question by Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon at the very start of his mandate by calling on the Congolese authorities to focus on security sector reform in his recent visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. His presence here this morning is testimony to his concern. It was also recognition of this fact that led former Secretary-General Kofi Annan to decide in 2006 on the establishment of a Security Sector Reform Working Group, incorporating the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The task assigned to the Working Group was to produce a policy outlining options for United Nations engagement in security sector reform within the context of peacebuilding efforts. The Working Group's composition is a clear recognition of the fact that no body of the United Nations can deal on its own with this question.

I particularly salute the role played by the Security Council, as well as the visibility given to this important issue, particularly as concerns post-conflict situations. It is, therefore, my conviction that this Council will take advantage of the work done by other United Nations bodies on this question. Success in security sector reform is the key to success in any post-conflict situation.

The work of the working group on security sector reform could, therefore, constitute one of the examples upon which we could build in our reflection today. On the other hand, the United Nations approach in the field of security sector reform should fully take into account the reform of the Organization currently under way, including the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, which constitutes an important framework for the same purpose. Recognizing that effective peacebuilding requires meticulous reform of the security sector, the Peacebuilding Commission, in coordination with the Governments concerned, has spared no effort to address this question pertaining to the countries on its agenda — namely, Burundi and Sierra Leone — taking into account the specificities of each case. In Sierra Leone, Peacebuilding Commission members agreed on the need to continue the ongoing national efforts in the fields of justice and security sector reform, to strengthen the justice system and the fair administration of justice and to promote further sustained reform of the security sector, including the police and army.

With regard to strengthening of the rule of law and the security sector in Burundi, Peacebuilding Commission members have agreed on the centrality of national efforts to strengthen the rule of law in consolidating peace, as well as the importance of completing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, with particular emphasis on effective reintegration programmes and reform of the security sector.

We are, therefore, faced with a challenging task. However, implementing security sector reform in post-conflict situations is only possible provided there is adequate support from the international community accompanied by responsible national ownership. This is a worthwhile investment by the international community. Recent experience in Haiti, Timor Leste, Guinea-Bissau and other countries has clearly demonstrated that, unless there is a sustainable and long-term engagement by the international community, there can be total disruption of fragile peace arrangements, representing a serious setback to international peace, which keeps the countries concerned on the agenda of this Council.

All of these lessons should contribute to our discussion today. The experience accumulated by regional organizations on their own and through cooperation between these organizations and the United Nations on security sector reform in post-conflict situations clearly points to the need for strengthening relations between regional organizations and the United Nations system. I trust that the Peacebuilding Commission will be a forum serving as a framework for this discussion, thus enriching the debate and the search for solutions to post-conflict situations.

I wish to conclude with a word of thanks to the Slovak presidency for having included this theme on the Council's agenda this month. I trust that today's deliberations will not only help to highlight the importance of the topic of security sector reform for the international community, but also, and in particular, contribute to the search for solutions and to sustained engagement by the international community.

The President: On behalf of the Security Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Cui Tiankai, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Cui Tiankai (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on Slovakia's presidency of the Security Council for this month. I wish to commend Slovakia for its initiative to hold this open debate. I am pleased to see you personally presiding over the meeting.

Security sector reform has become an important part of United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding. United Nations experience in Liberia and Sierra Leone shows that efforts to reform the security sector are conducive to restoring peace and promoting development and that they bear fruit. It also reminds us that such reform efforts are still facing many problems and challenges, which we must meet effectively.

The Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly, the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission have just made very enlightening statements. I would now like to make four comments.

First, in carrying out security sector reform, we should bear in mind the general goals of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, focusing on lasting peace and sustained development for the countries concerned. Reform should aim to ensure the involvement of security sectors such as the army and the police in nation-building, the preservation of stability and the promotion of economic growth. It should not be used as a tool for war and violence or as a catalyst for conflict and chaos.

Secondly, security sector reform should serve the comprehensive strategy of peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The mandates of United Nations missions are different from one another, as they deal with different issues. Reform should match and complement efforts towards reconciliation, economic recovery, the rule of law and human rights protection, and vice versa. The international community should give equal weight to those aspects and make parallel efforts in those areas.

Thirdly, the important role of the United Nations should be fully recognized in security sector reform. Currently, too many institutions are involved in reform and there is too little coordination among them. As a result, efficiency suffers. The United Nations, given its unique position, should play the leading and the coordinating role in the reform process and mobilize

all resources so as to increase efficiency. The United Nations could formulate a comprehensive approach to security sector reform by drawing on practices that have proved effective over years of United Nations peacekeeping operations. The General Assembly, the Security Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Economic and Social Council and relevant United Nations missions should be more involved, and coordination and communication between the United Nations and relevant regional organizations should be strengthened.

Fourthly, the will of the countries concerned should be respected in any security sector reform exercise. In the final analysis, the rebuilding of national institutions is essentially a country's internal affair and will depend on the country itself. As countries have different conditions and problems, it is useful to consult them and to listen to their opinions. The international community, for its part, should act more as an adviser and assistance provider aiming at improving their capacity to build their own strength and helping them to find mechanisms and approaches that fit their own conditions, instead of going beyond given mandates or even acting arbitrarily.

The United Nations was founded following the scourges of the two world wars. It has the important responsibility of building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity in the twenty-first century. We are duty-bound to reach out to those who are suffering as a result of conflicts and help them to emerge from the abyss of war, restore law and order and enjoy stability and security. We should bring conflicting parties together through mutual tolerance, the resolution of differences and national reconciliation. We should help them to heal the wounds of conflict and embark on the road to development, thus enabling them to enjoy the dividends of peace. All of that is in conformity with the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and is essential to conflict prevention, as well as peacekeeping and peacebuilding. China is ready to work with the Council to attain those objectives.

The President: On behalf of the Security Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Vittorio Craxi, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Italy, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Craxi (Italy) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Slovakia, which holds the presidency of the Security Council for this month, for having organized this important debate on security sector reform. I would also like to welcome your presence, Mr. Minister, which bears witness to the importance of the issue. This meeting provides a useful opportunity for us to undertake a shared assessment of what has been done to date and to identify priority avenues of action for the future.

Italy aligns itself with the statement to be made later on behalf of the presidency of the European Union. However, we would like to highlight a number of elements.

We attach vital importance to security sector reform for the stabilization of countries emerging from conflict, as well as for preventing a relapse in the future. In this regard, we believe that we must adopt a wide-ranging approach, viewing security as a system that includes not only the principal actors — mainly the security forces and the armed forces — but also Government institutions in general and the justice sector in particular.

Security sector reform must be considered an integral part of peacebuilding strategies, in which the United Nations plays a very important — indeed, fundamental — role. We are therefore convinced that such reform must be both closely linked to the immediate post-conflict phase — when priority is attached to peacekeeping and to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants — and part of broader, long-term planning for social development and the reconstruction of the structures of Government so that they can be self-sustaining. Our experience has taught us that it is not enough to help a country to endow itself with a police force in order to maintain public order, with respect for the principles of the rule of law; an effective system for the administration of justice must also be developed. Italy therefore supports an organic and consistent approach whose ultimate objective is good governance, respect for human rights and ensuring that democratic practices are deeply rooted all levels, as well as, of course, the pursuit of economic and social development.

My country feels that the role of the United Nations in security sector reform is fundamental for several reasons. First, the United Nations is the actor that enjoys the international legitimacy needed to act in a sector as sensitive as State security. Secondly, the

United Nations has a wide range of tools at its disposal, which makes it possible for it to carry out far-reaching activities, including not only the specific programmes implemented by various funds, agencies and programmes, but also the provision of assistance to local authorities in the security sector, actions that the Security Council has included in a growing number of peacekeeping mandates, in keeping with a vision of a more proactive role of the Blue Helmets.

In that context I wish to highlight the priority my country attaches to the development of the police component of the United Nations peacekeeping forces. With regard to our recent engagement, we were very pleased to welcome the decision of the United Nations to establish in Brindisi the headquarters of the new Standing Police Capacity. We thus expect an important role to be played by the new Peacebuilding Commission, whose specific goal is to ensure consistency and the best utilization of the resources shared among the many actors and of the activities of provided by the donor community, non-governmental organizations and civil society in many countries.

Italy believes that it is crucial to strengthen international coordination among international and regional organizations active in the field of security sector reform. We encourage an intensification of operational cooperation between the European Union and the United Nations.

In conclusion, respect for national ownership remains the key principle of security sector reform. That principle implies, on the one hand, that the authorities of a given country must define the priority sectors for action and a streamlined intervention strategy that addresses socio-economic development. Those authorities are also responsible for the success of the strategy.

Italy contributes to peacebuilding efforts in different crisis regions. In Afghanistan, Italy is the principle partner working to reform the legal system. It is cooperating with the local Government to promote coordination among the national authorities, the donors and the United Nations system. A conference will be organized in Rome, in May 2007, on justice and the rule of law. Its objective will be to revive donor activity in that sector. The popular demand for justice in Afghan civil society is very strong. Our experience in that area permits us to state that, without justice and the establishment of the rule of law, we cannot expect security or institutional or economic development. It is only through the establishment of civil and social justice and the rule of law that the civic awareness necessary to build democracy will develop as the mainstream political culture.

The President: Now I give the floor to the representative of Qatar. On behalf of the Security Council I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Muhammed Abdullah Mutih Al-Rumaihi, Assistant Foreign Minister for Follow-up and Head of the Working Group on United Nations Security Council Questions.

Mr. Al-Rumaihi (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): It gives me great pleasure at the outset, Mr. President, to extend to you our appreciation for the manner in which the delegation of your friendly country, Slovakia, has been conducting the work of the Council, and to thank you for the initiative of holding this meeting on the maintenance of international peace and security: role of the Security Council in supporting security sector reform.

It is no surprise that such an important initiative was launched by you after the efforts you personally exerted in various international posts in the past, seeking to draw attention to the major importance of the question of security sector reform.

On this occasion, the State of Qatar supports the ideas put forward by Slovakia to advance the issue of security sector reform and recognizes therein an integrated, multifaceted process. Those ideas have systematically and pragmatically included the objectives of the reform process and the means needed to achieve it. Therefore, we will not repeat them here.

The question of security sector reform is multidimensional and multifaceted. It does not fall within the purview of the Security Council alone. It involves several organs, both within and without the United Nations. The attendance of Her Excellency the President of the General Assembly and His Excellency the Secretary-General at this important meeting is but an affirmation of the magnitude assumed by the question.

It is our belief that security sector reform should be viewed in the wider context of building State institutions as a whole, specifically in post-conflict situations, and with a view to achieving a successful result for the reform process. The reform process must

also be subject to the same requirements of accountability as any other public service. The State of Qatar believes that at the forefront of security sector reform lies stabilization of the security sector and the achievement of comprehensive political and economic development, including the establishment of an effective judiciary capable of upholding justice that will complement the executive branch.

The overall objective of security sector reform is to ensure the discharge by the security institutions of their statutory functions, including providing security and justice for the people efficiently and effectively in an environment consistent with the principles of democracy, good governance and the rule of law, in order to achieve a state of laws.

A suitable strategy must be drawn up and elaborated so as to respond to the national conditions, requirements and concerns in each individual situation, in order to strengthen national ownership of the reform process, since there is no single model that can be applied in all situations.

The United Nations bears a special responsibility in elaborating a strategy for security sector reform, especially in countries where the United Nations has peacekeeping missions. It should, therefore, pay due attention in those cases to the particularities of the country concerned, in order to play an effective role in creating substantive circumstances that are conducive to reform. This requires, first of all, national reconciliation after conflict. National political forces must be allowed to play a principal role in drawing up the principles of security sector reform.

In view of the fact that security sector reform may be a long-term process in some cases — especially when the necessary elements for State-building are not available, or in the case of prolonged conflict — the international community should double its efforts to bridge the gap between the peacekeeping operation and peacebuilding, when the State concerned is referred to the Peacebuilding Commission in the future. In such a process, the Peacebuilding Commission has an important role to play in ensuring operational continuity.

It is indisputable that recognizing the sovereign rights of States and national ownership of the security sector reform process is critical to guaranteeing the success and sustainability of such a process. However, the contribution that can be made by regional organizations is yet another element in ensuring a coordinated effort, especially in view of the pioneering role that can be played by regional and subregional organizations, as they are in a better position to assess the optimum manner to deal with a conflict in their own region. That underscores the importance of consulting those organizations when formulating policies for security sector reform.

It almost goes without saying that all such efforts require sufficient ongoing support by the United Nations and other international actors, including bilateral, international and other donors, as well as regional organizations. That will ensure the success of a reform process aimed at consolidating peace in countries emerging from conflict, strengthening democratic institutions and creating the conditions necessary for justice and development. Those high objectives indicate that ensuring that this process continues is of enormous importance for the promotion of human rights.

I wish in conclusion, Mr. President, to thank your delegation for its efforts in the preparation of a draft presidential statement on this item. We look forward to its adoption at the conclusion of today's meeting.

The President: On behalf of the Security Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Pierre Chevalier, Special Envoy of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Chevalier (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I wish first of all to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your initiative to convene this thematic debate on security sector reform (SSR). The fact that you are here in person — and your person is an imposing one — illustrates the importance you attach to this critical issue. We are also honoured by the presence of the Secretary-General.

I believe that this is an excellent opportunity to delve into a concept that is susceptible of diverse interpretations. Better understanding will undoubtedly contribute to better implementation and coordination on the part of the actors concerned. Belgium considers that any concept of SSR should be adapted to local circumstances. There is no single standard concept of SSR; there are as many interpretations as there are situations. Local ownership will be key to the success of any SSR programme.

In our view, SSR is an integrated and holistic process, whose success clearly depends on the capacity of the various institutions — military, police and judiciary — and on the relationship among them, with a view to ensuring lasting security and justice in the country concerned.

At this meeting I wish to consider in detail two aspects of the issue. The first is the time frame: the sequence of the successive phases of an SSR process. The second relates to the crucial importance of coordination and interaction among all actors.

We must all understand that it is not only in countries where peacekeeping operations are deployed that security sector reform is an issue. But I wish to concentrate my remarks today on situations involving peacekeeping operations. In preparing a peacekeeping operation it is important to integrate SSR dimension as soon as possible: during the planning stage. During the initial post-conflict phase, the country will face the challenge of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); in that phase the best possible coordination should be ensured between DDR and SSR — which, as we all know, are closely interrelated. At that point, local ownership is limited, because of the institutional shortcomings seen in all countries emerging from conflict. But local ownership must become more important — indeed decisive — in the transitional phase, when armed groups have been demobilized or reintegrated into the regular army.

Experience has shown that great efforts must be made to bring about a transition from rebel group to regular army in order to build well-disciplined, effective military and security forces. Security sector reform changes during that phase: the role of Government becomes central and longer-term strategy replaces short-term actions.

I turn now to the need for good interaction and coordination among the actors involved in the process of security sector reform: who does what, and when they do it. In principle, peacekeeping operations cover the short term and the medium term; they play an important role in SSR because of the great fragility of the countries in which they are deployed. Clearly, the time required for complete and successful security sector reform far exceeds the mandate of a peacekeeping operation. Long-term engagement requires involvement of other actors beyond the peacekeeping phase, in particular regional organizations and bilateral actors, to help the Government with successful security sector reform. Good interaction and coordination among the peacekeeping operation, the Government concerned and other actors is key for the success of any reform. The Peacebuilding Commission could, as required during this post-conflict phase, ensure consistency in the actions undertaken by external actors.

I turn briefly to the issue of the financing of SSR programmes. The current criteria of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development sharply limit the possibility of reporting the financing of SSR programmes as part of official development assistance. But in many cases SSR is a precondition for the reconstruction and sustainable development of States emerging from conflict. Recognizing funding for SSR programmes as official development assistance would unquestionably help ensure the financing of these programmes.

I renew my thanks to you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate, and I assure you that my country is committed to an ongoing discussion of this topic.

Mr. Wolff (United States of America): We too, Sir, would like to commend you and your Government for selecting security sector reform as the topic for open debate during Slovakia's first presidency of the Security Council.

The United States is in full agreement that the multidimensional nature of today's complex emergencies and peace operations requires a carefully coordinated and cohesive international response. Security sector reform is a critical component of that response. Failing, failed and post-conflict States often present similar challenges to global security and prosperity. If left unattended, they can provide breeding grounds for terrorism, crime, trafficking, humanitarian catastrophes and other threats to our common interests.

The United Nations and Member States can play a critical role in mitigating and responding to these threats and related crises. But ad hoc responses to crises, while sometimes necessary, are rarely sufficient. Individually and collectively, we must continue to develop integrated approaches to address crises rapidly. From the very first stages of response to elements critical to sustainable security in post-conflict environments. Specific areas that require our attention

include: transitional security and rule of law; good governance and democratic participation; humanitarian response; and economic reconstruction.

The United States is prepared to work with other Member States and to play an active role in this regard. Already, the United States is one of the largest contributors of United Nations police to United Nations peacekeeping. We firmly believe that an effective United Nations police operation is a major component of crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction — one that can help serve as a bridge to democracy.

In the wake of war, there is often a rise in criminal activity, particularly in the immediate post-conflict period. While military peacekeepers can help stabilize a country, establishing a competent, impartial and adequately resourced law enforcement system is no less critical for the continued maintenance of security. Police are essential in re-establishing local and national public security institutions and the rule of law.

We must take a comprehensive approach, however, that incorporates not just policing, but also the entire public security and justice system. Building police capacity must be integrated with assistance to the judicial and penal systems. Without such an integrated approach, policing becomes nothing more than an extension of peacekeeping functions, rather than a vital precursor to peacebuilding. To that end, it is of paramount importance that the rule of law be rapidly established throughout the territory of the post-conflict State. This is essential in order to prevent the emergence of political corruption, organized crime and the activities of other criminal and terrorist elements that wish to obstruct the peace process.

We appreciate the ongoing efforts by various United Nations departments, agencies and programmes to address the various dimensions of complex emergencies and peace operations. In addition, we must continue to work with regional organizations and with the international financial institutions, as well as bilaterally, to improve coordination and interoperability, build a shared understanding of our responsibilities and develop means for collaboration and burden-sharing.

In closing, I wish to state that the United States will continue to support effective multilateral cooperation in confronting the challenges of internal conflict and State collapse. We are convinced that such coordination and cooperation are central to the success of any security sector reform effort.

Mr. Voto-Bernales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Minister, on the outstanding way in which the delegation of Slovakia is guiding the Security Council. In particular, I commend you for your initiative to convene this open debate to discuss security sector reform, which is of great importance for the international community and for the Council.

The tasks of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security have been evolving and increasing in recent years. Council action is not limited to conflicts between States, but has extended to violent intra-State conflicts that have international implications.

Managing a crisis requires not only putting an end to direct confrontation, but also combating the fundamental causes of the problem in order to prevent relapse. Thus, new threats to international peace and security lead us to examine a State's structure and its relationship with its population in the post-conflict phase.

Any State that has suffered an internal armed conflict needs to rebuild the institutions that will enable it to organize political life, provide security and promote the well-being of its population. It is essential to recover, in a democratic manner, the principle of authority, respect for the law and a legitimate monopoly on the use of force. Such progress must be accompanied by protection of human rights and the equitable administration of justice.

Security sector reform in countries that have experienced conflict is a long-term process. It involves broad intersectoral planning and requires participation by all national political and social groups, which bear primary responsibility for their own future. We recognize that every post-conflict situation has its own characteristics. That requires that it be addressed in a specific manner, on a case-by-case basis.

The United Nations is called upon to play an important part in support of these processes. Specifically, the Peacebuilding Commission will have to play a major role in that effort, promoting improvements and the utilization of national capacities and providing proposals and advice on comprehensive post-conflict strategies. Similarly, it will have to

cooperate in the quest for assistance and international financing, in coordination with other United Nations organs, subregional and regional actors and other international organizations, including financial institutions and donor entities.

By addressing security sector reform, we have begun a new stage linked to peacekeeping operations, thus lending continuity to a major process in finding lasting solutions to crises. Among the elements related to security sector reform, my delegation wishes to highlight the following.

First, it is essential to give priority to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants in order to pacify society and help build a solid basis for the reconstruction of the Government and of institutions. In that regard, we must reiterate that it is urgent to carry out effective measures to control the trade in and possession of weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons. That includes countries that are weapons producers, sellers or brokers.

Secondly, we must give priority to the establishment of institutions providing order and internal security and to the appropriate training of their personnel. The objective is to train a professional police force, with an institutional structure, that has clear guidelines and parameters. To be sure, that requires a high level of political will, experience and resources.

Thirdly, we need to consider, on a case-by-case basis, restructuring or strengthening the armed forces of countries emerging from internal conflict, taking into account their reintegration into a democratic framework and factors related to their defence responsibilities and the requirements of national reconstruction.

Fourthly, it must be emphasized that security sector reform should be supplemented by attention to social and economic factors that could trigger insecurity, such as poverty, marginalization and exclusion.

Finally, the Security Council must continue to support the continuance of peace missions for as long as necessary to consolidate reform and ensure adequate training in the security sector in order to prevent the re-emergence of conflicts and violence. In that way we can facilitate the rebuilding of States that provide to their citizens stability and conditions conducive to inclusive development within a socially acceptable political context.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for taking the initiative to hold this timely and much needed debate. The presence of the Slovak Foreign Minister and the Secretary-General underlines the importance of this issue. I should also like to thank the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission for their contributions.

On 16 February, I had the privilege of presiding over an Arria-style meeting in preparation for today's debate. It was a very useful occasion, and I will attach to the written copy of my present intervention my summing up of those discussions.

I align myself with the statement to be made by my German colleague on behalf of the European Union. Security sector reform is an issue in which the Union and its member States are intimately involved in many countries around the world. I would, however, now like to make a few observations based on the United Kingdom's own experience.

Security is a basic human need and a basic human right, and without security, economic development and poverty reduction cannot progress. Security institutions — the police, judiciary, military and penal systems — should ensure security and justice for all sectors of the population, regardless of ethnic or religious affiliation, gender, wealth, status or political allegiance. And we must ensure particular focus at the community level. If security institutions fail to provide security and justice equally and fairly for all people within a community, there is an increased risk of instability and insecurity, or even of insurgency or, still worse, civil war.

We have seen a huge demand for United Nations peacekeeping forces over the last decade, most of which have been based in countries emerging from civil war. We have to recognize that security sector reform is an essential step in preventing conflict and conflict relapse; it needs to be taken seriously at all stages of the conflict cycle.

Strong, fair and effective security and justice institutions prevent instability and reduce the risk of conflict becoming violent. The re-establishment of

security and mechanisms for resolving crimes and disputes are a necessary component of stabilization, conflict transformation and resolution, and the re-establishment of capable, accountable, responsive and sustainable security and justice institutions is a critical component of post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding.

Security sector reform is a national responsibility. It should be defined and owned by national stakeholders, informed by the best international standards and practices, and then supported by the international community. Effective security sector reform requires a comprehensive approach, particularly in post-conflict environments, where the problems are many, complex and interrelated. A single, nationally-owned, agreed and driven strategic plan, around which international partners coordinate their support, is needed.

The United Nations should be willing and able to play a key role in coordination of that support by facilitating the work of the national stakeholders in three key areas: first, shared analysis of what needs to be done, when and to what extent; secondly, development of a clear strategic implementation plan; and thirdly, establishment of a mechanism for the management, monitoring and evaluation of that implementation.

In those very difficult situations, the establishment or re-establishment of capable, accountable, responsive and sustainable security and justice institutions will require strong political support, technical expertise, and human and financial resources. No one international partner or national Government has all of those capabilities. A combined effort is needed. It will also require that most precious of commodities: time. International partners must plan to support security sector reform programmes for years, even decades, until national institutions are fully functioning.

Before I conclude, let me be a little more specific about the measures that we believe would strengthen the United Nations work on security sector reform. We believe that there are four main areas. First, the United Nations system needs to further refine the roles and responsibilities of its different departments, agencies, funds and programmes on security sector reform. We welcome the work undertaken on that so far, but believe that it now needs to be worked out in practice on the ground and carried further forward. Secondly, there should be a clear strategic lead on security sector reform within the United Nations system, coordinating the work and giving oversight to the whole process. Where it sits is less important; that it should exist is very important. Thirdly, the United Nations should define system-wide core principles on security sector reform, drawing on its own lessons learned and on established best practice, such as the work of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in that area. Fourthly, between us all, we should do our utmost to ensure that security sector reform happens, and that nation States, regional organizations and the United Nations all contribute to the work that needs to be done, and that it is therefore done in a coherent fashion.

We believe that those measures would help the United Nations to play its pivotal supporting role on security sector reform in the countries that need it the most. We welcome the acknowledgement in the presidential statement of the need for a comprehensive report on United Nations approaches to security sector reform, and we look forward to the detailed recommendations of that report on how the United Nations can help to ensure security and justice for all.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Let me start by commending the delegation of Slovakia for organizing this important initiative. We commend it particularly for developing this theme over a long time before this debate and for its commitment to continue refining it further beyond today.

We, too, would like to recognize the contribution made by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, the President of the Economic and Social Council, and the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Security sector reform is a relatively new tool for building long-lasting peace and development, but a critical one indeed. It is a necessary tool for creating an enabling environment for the promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of the rule of law. In other words, it is hard to imagine long-lasting post-conflict reconstruction and development without addressing security sector reform.

When a country is in the grip of conflict, State institutions are the first to collapse and the democratic way of life, including the culture of human rights, is

eroded. Organs of State — such as the judiciary, the police and the military — begin to serve those in power rather than the rest of the population. As a result of the democratic breakdown, the various parties to the conflict resort to creating their own private armies. All that leads to a general breakdown of trust in State institutions, as everyone is left to conclude that democracy has been abandoned and human rights no longer apply.

Security sector reform, therefore, is not a process that is restricted only to building the State institutions. It is also about the building of trust between populations and newly established democratic institutions.

The reform of the security sector requires full country ownership, backed by an informed and active legislature, a clear Government policy framework, and an effective executive authority, together with an active civil society. The roles and responsibilities of all those responsible for the security of a country need to be spelled out and fully understood by everyone.

Security sector reform also needs to be perceived as part of the broader post-conflict reconstruction and development framework of a country emerging from conflict. In that regard, the linkages between elements of security sector reform, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and a development framework are important. For example, in countries demobilizing youth, particularly child soldiers, a development framework providing for jobs and education are critical to the success of security sector reform.

It is imperative that the international community, including the United Nations, seriously define its role in the security sector reform process. Locally and internationally, there is a shortage of available specialists who can assist with security sector reform, particularly in the policy-making arena. While different countries emerging from conflict may present common challenges, their security, political and development needs may vary, and may even be unique. Successful SSR therefore requires good coordination, given the diverse national institutions that may exist even in a country that has just come out of conflict.

The international community has been involved in various aspects of SSR, but not in a coordinated manner. The idea of security sector reform as a distinct approach requires that it be coordinated. The process should be inclusive of all national stakeholders, thereby contributing to restoring the confidence of the population in a country emerging from conflict.

Yet, the assistance provided by the international community should be clearly defined. The donor community should avoid imposing solutions, which are often at variance with the interests of a country emerging from conflict. The process should be one that favours conflict resolution and promotes national reconciliation. In the recent past, the international community, and the donor community in particular, has had a tendency to impose solutions on countries emerging from conflict. The uncertainty brought about by the competing, and sometimes conflicting, interests of donors on the one side and national interests on the other have often led to a number of challenges for countries emerging from conflict. As a result, the process has ended up favouring the donor country rather than the national reconciliation process or nation-building.

The role of the various agencies of the United Nations should be clearly defined as well. Central in defining the role of all United Nations agencies should be the need to guard against the potential of eroding the rules-based international order for which the United Nations stands. The need for the preservation of multilateralism should translate into enabling the country receiving assistance to develop its own all-inclusive national priorities. For countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, SSR could perhaps benefit from the overall coordination of the reconstruction and development of that country.

While external actors can inform and advise, they cannot prescribe when it comes to matters of national security. That can be achieved through an open and transparent national process, with the assistance of the international community.

We have witnessed disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes being applied with deadly consequences. The insecurity brought about by ineffective police and military is manifested in the flow of small arms and light weapons. Corruption, which is also brought about by the lack of accountability and proper functioning of a State, can become rampant. Human rights abuses increase, and the threat of a country relapsing into violence is always great.

The experience of South Africa's approach to security sector reform was based on many factors that

were underpinned by an inclusive process involving all South Africans, especially women. Despite the historical institutional marginalization of South African women, their participation and the supportive role they played in our SSR process was crucial, as women participated as decision-makers advocating for democratic change and for a more equitable and just society for all. There was recognition that this was to be a long-term process that required commitment from all.

It may be argued that one agency of the United Nations may have precedence over others. Yet the discourse on the development of an approach to security sector reform cannot take place in isolation from the ongoing discussion on the reform of the United Nations, and in particular that of the Security Council. The fact that the Security Council factors in some elements of security sector reform in authorizing peacekeeping missions should not be misunderstood to imply that the Council has precedence over other United Nations organs. The role of the various United Nations organs in relation to security sector reform initiatives should also be clarified. The lessons from regional and subregional organizations should be taken into account where appropriate.

It is worth recalling that the various contexts in which SSR takes place will not always be in line with the mandate of the Security Council. There have been cases of countries not on the agenda of the Council having chosen to undertake SSR activities. The framework that we seek to elaborate should therefore recognize the different contexts in which SSR occurs. That will enable us to make a proper determination as to whether we should seek a rigid United Nations framework for SSR or an indication of comprehensive guidelines and best practices.

It is for that reason that we believe that this meeting affords us the opportunity to undertake a realistic evaluation of how we can all work together to develop a comprehensive approach to SSR. South Africa looks forward to co-hosting a workshop on SSR, together with the Slovak Republic, later this year as a way to continue the valuable contributions we are receiving today.

Mr. Arias (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to join others who have spoken before me in congratulating you, Mr. President, as well as the delegation of Slovakia, for the initiative to hold this debate on security sector reform (SSR), a subject of great importance for the work of the United Nations in general, and specifically for that of the Security Council.

When we talk about the security sector we are referring to a whole panoply of State institutions that provide support for the rule of law: the armed forces, the police, the judicial system and the intelligence services, among others. Although security sector reform is primarily the responsibility of individual States, the goal of ensuring that each State reforms its security sector to support democratic institutions, guarantee the rule of law and protect human rights has pride of place on the international agenda.

We believe that security sector reform should be considered in the context of the widely recognized link that exists between security, development and human rights. A dysfunctional security sector may itself be a source of instability that creates obstacles for both development and the enjoyment of human rights. As each of those issues is intimately affected by the historical, political and cultural reality of each country, all security sector reform projects must conform to those realities.

The Republic of Panama believes that security is a public service, given that the State has a responsibility to protect its people. A democratic State has the duty and responsibility to provide security as a service that conforms to the same standards of quality and transparency that regulate other public services and institutions. In that connection, State protection of democratic institutions and national integrity constitutes the manner through which sustainable human development can be guaranteed.

The United Nations has been playing an important role in the area of security sector reform, although in a disjointed way due to the functional competencies of its various organs and agencies. That role includes initiatives ranging from disarmament and non-proliferation to the demobilization and reintegration of irregular forces, as well as combating trafficking in human beings, the circulation of small arms and light weapons and illicit drugs. Its work covers a wide array of policies, such as strengthening judicial systems.

Given that wide spectrum of closely interlinked activities, we believe that the thematic and operational approach of the United Nations requires an integrated

and coordinated focus, as well as clearly defined goals and priorities. There is therefore a need to promote concrete measures that will ensure coherent and holistic management of the issue on the part of the various entities of the Organization.

Everyone agrees that one of the functions of the Security Council is to prevent situations that might jeopardize international peace and security. It is all the more critical, when resolving conflict situations, that we look at reforming the security sector in post-conflict situations, and it is critical to live up to the responsibility of resolving situations of conflict. It is somewhat more complex when dealing with the process of reforming the security sector of a State in the so-called post-conflict stage.

It is in this phase where the Security Council, as well as the Peacebuilding Commission, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat, will have important responsibilities to carry out. It is also in this phase that all the distinct organs of the United Nations will have to act as successive and coordinated parts of a whole in carrying out the objectives and priorities previously established. Only thus will we be able to help each country to reform and tailor its security sector with a view to fulfilling the responsibility to protect the individual human being.

In this context, we deem that the United Nations must call for and promote the participation of regional organizations, as stated in Chapter VIII of the Charter, as well as civil society organizations, so that they might play a more active role in this domain.

Panama is a donor country of peace and security at the regional and international level; hence, the great importance we attach to their maintenance and preservation as a universal public good, and in our particular situation as a provider of services, it even becomes a strategic good. This is why the Government of Panama considers that the debate on the issue of security sector reform must be oriented towards generating a broad-ranging consensus, based on respect for the principles and norms of international law and the United Nations Charter.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like, first of all, to thank the Slovak presidency of the Security Council and Minister Ján Kŭbis in particular for organizing this very useful debate on an important topic. We hope very much that today's debate will move understanding of the security sector reform forward and will improve its integration in Security Council activities.

At the risk of repeating what other colleagues have said, I would like to begin by saying something about the concept, while underlining two points. The first is the importance I see between development and security. Security issues are not just military issues. They are also a precondition to development and to combating poverty, and we see this in every crisis. If a reliable degree of security is not restored, all development activity is jeopardized.

The second point — and this has also been emphasized by many speakers before me — is the need to approach security sector reform from a holistic point of view, integrating security sector reform within a broader process of improving governance. This, of course, makes the task more complicated, because it means that one must act simultaneously in different domains — police, judiciary and military, as we see in the example of Haiti.

There is brainstorming now under way in many international forums. France, with its partners, is working on the conceptual approach within the European Union and in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The approach we are following seeks the consolidation of State institutions, the improvement of the well being of the population, guarantees of physical safety and the possibility for the population to exercise its political, economic and social rights. The concept of security sector reform is now uppermost in the crafting of European security and defense policy, as will be emphasized by the German representative, speaking in a moment on behalf of the European Union.

The second point I would like to make is that we have to reflect on the specific responsibility of the Security Council in this field. At a time when we are setting up the Peacebuilding Commission, it is important for the Council to think about activities that will be necessary in post-conflict periods, just when the crisis is over, so that this activity can continue naturally in the post-conflict timetable. This means that the Security Council will have to take the organization of security system reform into consideration very early on, as it is doing more and more often in the mandates of peacekeeping operations. But the question of the exact scope and responsibility of the Security Council

as regards security sector reform, as compared to other international institutions or bilateral partners, that role of the Council, that specific responsibility of the Council, is something that I do not think can be defined ahead of time. It will depend on the circumstances in each given case. I do not think there are any easy nostrums that can be applied.

On the other hand, we also have to bear in mind, to the extent possible, that the international community must act in support of a national plan, the success of which requires the will of the State concerned. This ownership of national planning is indispensable. The international community cannot achieve anything useful in this field if the legitimate Government is not at the very core of the effort.

My country, side by side with its partners in the international community, is endeavouring to fully take into consideration the issue of security sector reform in its actions in support of peacekeeping operations and in post-conflict situations. There are four examples I would like to put forward.

In the Central African Republic, after the success of the elections in 2005, France committed itself to supporting a return to peace and stabilization in the context of an integrated project that included the police, the judiciary and the media.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, at a time when we are thinking once again about the new mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the distribution of tasks between the European Union and the United Nations Mission, as regards security, is going to be a crucial topic. European Union police missions and the European Union advisory and assistance mission for security reform are making an indispensable contribution. France will be consolidating its own interventions in this country in the areas of police, the judiciary and military reform.

In Burundi, we are developing a project to support the training of the Burundi police — the new forces — and this has been set up, together with complementary Belgian and Dutch programmes, as well as the programme of the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi, which took over from the United Nations Mission in Burundi on 1 January.

In Haiti, where international action now fully integrates the idea of a complete reform of State security, my country has contributed to the reorganization of the Haitian police's structures. We note with interest that the Haitian authorities have taken ownership to a considerably greater extent of this process, and we see this in the requests made recently by the Port-au-Prince authorities to the international community.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that security sector reform remains a crucial challenge, because it is vital to stability and development. It is also a very complex matter, since it calls for simultaneous action in different areas, involving a great number of actors. One of the challenges is precisely to create synergy and to coordinate all the actors well. What is true in peacekeeping operations as countries seek to emerge from crisis is even more important in post-conflict situations, where one may think the emergency has been reduced, but perhaps it is not, and this leads sometimes to a reduced mobilization on the part of the international community.

We therefore have high expectations of the Peacebuilding Commission in terms of enhancing synergies and ensuring such coordination. I would like to add that France will be particularly interested in the advice that the Peacebuilding Commission continues to provide to the Security Council on security sector reform in the context of its work on Burundi and Sierra Leone. My delegation will also follow closely any information referred to us by the Secretary-General regarding a more broad-ranging vision that he may have of this concept within the overall United Nations system.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): At the outset, Mr. President, I would like, on behalf of my delegation, to extend our appreciation to you and your delegation for having convened this open debate on the role of the Security Council in supporting security sector reform.

Security sector reform (SSR) remains a contentious and complex subject. This forum is therefore beneficial in that it gives us an opportunity to have an exchange of ideas and experiences on the subject in a complementary manner, with a view to obtaining a better picture of the subject and of the role of the United Nations in general, and the Security Council in particular, in that regard.

My delegation recognizes that reform of the security sector at the country level can take place at any point in the development of a country, but the

urgency of SSR is generally strong and its manifestation particularly noticeable when the country in question is experiencing a transformation, including democratic transition, or when it is emerging from a conflict situation.

In both contexts, reform in the security sector is interlinked with reform in other sectors. When crafted carefully and implemented consistently, and when the participation of civil society is ensured, reforms in different sectors will be mutually reinforcing.

Some seven years ago, Indonesians were facing the challenges and multidimensional problems resulting from the Asian financial crisis. Yet the crisis did not stop Indonesians from pursuing transformation in the political, economic, legal, and governmental landscapes. They embraced democracy — in fact, Indonesians regarded that democratic transition as a means of salvation and of recovery from the crisis.

Based on its experiences, Indonesia holds the view that reform in the security sector will be meaningful if national ownership is present and if the participation of various stakeholders is ensured. Reform in one sector will lay the foundation for reform in other sectors. Security sector reform should be pursued in a manner which is neither too hasty nor too drawn out.

As far as the United Nations approach to the subject is concerned, we underline that such an approach should be confined to post-conflict contexts. The demand for coherence and coordination in supporting SSR activities in post-conflict situations warrants managerial and institutional reform at Headquarters as well as at the field level. Agencies within the United Nations system that have SSR support programmes should collaborate more closely and coherently.

My delegation also underlines the central role that the Peacebuilding Commission can play in enhancing the United Nations capacity to support security sector reform and the effectiveness of the United Nations mission in strengthening such reform as part of peacebuilding efforts. We welcome the intention of the Peacebuilding Commission to consider the SSR aspect of peacebuilding strategies in Burundi and Sierra Leone.

My delegation believes that SSR should be nationally owned and rooted in the particular needs and conditions of the country concerned. It is a national project that requires leadership on the Government's part and participatory contributions from civil society.

For post-conflict countries, security sector reform often requires substantial resources. We believe that financial and technical assistance from the international community would be meaningful for such countries in helping them to cope with resource challenges and in building national capacities that could strengthen national ownership of SSR.

Diversity in security sector reform should be respected. In our view, there is no single type of SSR that can fit all situations. That should not, however, prevent us from generating lessons learned and best practices.

Security sector reform is a long-term process and requires steadiness and unflagging commitment from the country concerned. Rushing SSR has the potential to ruin a country's institutional foundation and to uproot its indigenous components. There is no universal blueprint for SSR, and its implementation depends on the basic needs of national political processes and dynamics. There is therefore no quick-fix solution for post-conflict security sector reform. Accordingly, my delegation emphasizes the need for a balanced realization of all aspects of security sector reform, including institutional capacity, the affordability and sustainability of programmes, sequencing, timing and flexibility.

As regards the role of the Security Council in supporting SSR activities in a post-conflict environment, we believe that the Council could propose, through its mission mandates, the parameters for security sector reform in post-conflict countries, particularly in the transition from an initial peacekeeping activity to post-conflict peacebuilding programmes. In order to develop viable SSR structures, the Council should consult with relevant organs within the United Nations system, including the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, and should take into account the concerns of the countries involved.

Finally, my delegation wishes to reaffirm its commitment to participating in an active and constructive manner in future discussions of the subject.

The President: As there are still a number of speakers on my list, I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.05 p.m.